

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
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R 181830Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4652

C O N F I D D N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MADRID 05567

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PINT, SP
SUBJECT: VIEWS OF MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS JOAQUIN
GARRIGUES WALKER ON SPANISH INTERNAL POLITICAL FUTURE

REF: MADRID 5516

1. I FOLLOWED-UP MY MAY 17 TOUR D'HORIZON WITH SANCHEZ-
TERAN REPORTED REFTEL WITH A SIMILAR CONVERSATION WITH
GARRIGUES WALKER ON MAY 18. GARRIGUES WALKER, WHO IS THE
LEADING LIBERAL MEMBER OF THE COALITION OF CHRISTIAN
DEMOCRATS, SOCIAL DEMOCRATS, INDEPENDENTS AND LIBERALS
THAT MAKES UP THE UCD, HAS A RATHER DIFFERENT VIEW OF THE
FUTURE POLITICAL MAP AND CALENDAR IN SPAIN THAN THAT OF
SANCHEZ-TERAN, AS WILL BE SEEN FROM THE FOLLOWING SUMMARY
OF WHAT HE SAID.

2. IN CONTRAST TO SANCHEZ-TERAN, GARRIGUES WALKER
BELIEVES THAT FELIPE GONZALEZ HAS ALREADY WON IN HIS
EFFORT TO TURN THE PSOE INTO A SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY.
GONZALEZ MAY NOT IN FACT HAVE CONSULTED A LARGE NUMBER
OF OTHER PSOE LEADERS ON HIS ATTEMPT TO ALTER THE IMAGE
OF THE PSOE AND ALSO CONFIRM IT ON A MODERATE SOCIAL
DEMOCRAT COURSE, BUT HIS SUCCESS IN ACHIEVING THESE
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OBJECTIVES WAS PREORDAINED BY WHERE THE VOTES ARE FOR
THE PSOE FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE IN SPAIN.

3. THE COUNTERPART OF THIS ARGUMENT, IN GARRIGUEZ
WALKER'S MIND, IS THAT THE UCD MUST DROP ITS OWN EFFORTS
TO ACHIEVE A SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC IMAGE AND BECOME A PARTY
WITH A MORE DEFINITE "PROGRESSIVE LIBERAL" IMAGE. THIS

WOULD BE AN IMAGE STRESSING INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS AND INDEPENDENCE AND PRIVATE INITIATIVE. IN THE PROCESS HIS FACTION IN THE PARTY IS DESTINED TO COME OUT ON TOP AND THE SEEMING GAINS OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC FACTION IN THE PARTY IN THE RECENT REORGANIZATION OF THE PARTY STRUCTURE WILL PROVE TO HAVE, IN FACT, LITTLE MEANING.

4. GAARRIGUES WALKER'S ARGUMENT CONTINUES THAT AFTER THE CONSTITUTIONAL REFERENDUM IN THE EARLY AUTUMN THERE SHOULD BE A MAJOR REMODELING OF THE GOVERNMENT WITH THE ELIMINATION OF MOST MEMBERS WHO HAVE HAD A PAST FALANGIST TINGE (READ ESPECIALLY MARTIN VILLA), BUT NOT SUAREZ HIMSELF WHO IS VERY POPULAR AND NOW STANDS ABOVE THIS TYPE OF ISSUE.

5. GARRIGUES WALKER DID NOT ALSO COMMENT, AS WOULD HAVE SEEMED LOGICAL, THAT SOME SOCIAL DEMOCRATS MIGHT ALSO LEAVE THE GOVERNMENT AND THE UCD TO JOIN THE PSOE. HE DID SAY, INSTEAD, THAT THE PSOE MIGHT SEEK AT SOME POINT TO GOVERN WITH HIM AND HIS FOLLOWERS, EVEN THOUGH HE QUICKLY COMMENTED -- NOT TOO CONVINCINGLY -- THAT HE WOULD NOT WANT THIS. (THIS APPEARS TO INVOLVE TWO ASSUMPTIONS: THAT THE PSOE WOULD FEEL THE NEED TO DEMONSTRATE THE MODERATION OF ITS PUTATIVE GOVERNMENT BY BRINGING INTO IT SUCH DEMONSTRABLY NON-MARXIST FIGURES AS GARRIGUES WALKER; AND THAT GARRIGUES HIMSELF WOULD

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CONTINUE TO BE SEEN, DESPITE HIS ESTABLISHMENT BACKGROUND AND CONSERVATIVE PROGRAMMATIC STANCE, AS A "PROGRESSIVE" ELEMENT WITHIN UCD AND THUS RELATIVELY ACCEPTABLE TO THE PSOE AS A COALITION PARTNER. THERE IS OF COURSE AN ELEMENT OF OPPORTUNISM IN BOTH ASSUMPTIONS.)

6. AGAIN IN CONTRAST TO SANCHEZ-TERAN, GARRIGUES WALKER THOUGHT THAT THERE WOULD HAVE TO BE NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS LATE IN 1978 OR EARLY IN 1979 TO CLARIFY THE POLITICAL SCENE AND THAT MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS WOULD NOT OCCUR UNTIL PERHAPS JUNE OF 1979, AFTER LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS.

7. GARRIGUES WALKER WAS OPTIMISTIC ON THE ECONOMY, NOTING THAT THE STABILIZATION PROGRAM HAD GONE VERY WELL THUS FAR AND EXPECTING THAT LABOR WOULD STAND STILL FOR ANOTHER YEAR OF WAGE RESTRAINT BASICALLY BECAUSE THE COMMUNISTS AND THE SOCIALISTS SAW STABILIZATION OF THE ECONOMY TO BE IMPORTANT TO THE CONTINUATION OF DEMOCRACY AND THEREFORE TO THEIR OWN POLITICAL INTEREST. HE AGREED THAT FOREIGN INVESTORS CURRENTLY HAD A MORE FAVORABLE VIEW OF ECONOMIC PROSPECTS IN SPAIN THAN DID SPANISH INVESTORS

BUT HOPED THAT CONFIDENCE WOULD RETURN TO SPANISH
INVESTORS IN THE NOT TOO DISTANT FUTURE.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 MADRID 05567

8. COMMENT. GARRIGUES WALKER'S VIEW OF THE POLITICAL
PANORAMA HAS SOME LOGIC BUT ALSO IS SELF-SERVING. A
QUITE DIFFERENT THESIS BEING ARGUED HERE IS THAT THE UCD
UNDER SUAREZ SHOULD ACTIVELY COMPETE WITH THE PSOE FOR
SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC VOTES, EVEN THOUGH THE TOTAL SPANISH
ELECTORATE MAY LEAN SOMEWHAT CENTER-RIGHT, BECAUSE THE
CENTER-RIGHT REALLY HAS NOWHERE ELSE TO GO.

9. FROM THIS CONVERSATION ONE DOES NOT GET A VERY
REASSURING VIEW OF UCD UNITY AND STABILITY, BUT THEN
THE UCD THUS FAR ALWAYS HAS BEEN A CREATURE OF POLITICAL
CONVENIENCE RESPONDING TO SUAREZ' PERSONAL POLITICAL
STRENGTH. GARRIGUES WALKER ESPECIALLY HAS LONG FIGURED
PROMINENTLY AMONG THOSE RUMORED TO BE PLAYING FOOTsie
WITH THE PSOE. EATON

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